

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

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NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 /076 W

-----124482 091715Z /43

O 091641Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9878

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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BRUSSELS FOR SECRETARY

PARIS FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV, PINT, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: SMITH'S INTERNAL SETTLEMENT

1. IN A PRESS REPORT FROM SALISBURY ON DECEMBER 1, SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNALIST IAN BLACK STATED THAT SMITH IS CLOSE TO A DEAL WITH THE RHODESIAN NATIONALISTS. ACCORDING TO BLACK:

A) A PREDOMINATLY BLACK INTERIM GOVERNMENT WILL BE IN PLACE BY MARCH, 1978;

B) THERE WILL BE A REFERENDUM OF THE PRESENT, PREDOMINATLY WHITE ELECTORATE ON THE INDEPENDENCE

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CONSTITUTION WITH A ONE MAN, ONE VOTE ELECTION IN MID-1978;

C) PROBABLY MAKE UP OF INTERIM GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE WILL BE A COMMITTEE WITH SMITH AND THE THREE NATIONALIST LEADERS, MUZOREWA, SITHOLE AND CHIRAU;

D) PROSPECTS OF NKOMO PLAYING A SIGNIFICANT PART IN THE SETTLEMENT ARE FAST FADING;

E) THERE WOULD PROBABLY BE A SIXTEEN MEMBER

CABINET WITH THE RF HOLDING SEVEN PORTFOLIOS AND THE NATIONALIST GROUPS THREE EACH; BUT THE BEST RATIO THE NATIONALISTS COULD HOPE FOR WOULD BE A TWO-TO-ONE MAJORITY;

F) THE WHITES WILL END UP WITH A GUARANTEE OF ONE-THIRD OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SEATS FOR BETWEEN FIVE AND TEN YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE;

G) AND, "MEMBERS OF THE GUERRILLA FORCES" WOULD BE ABSORBED INTO THE NEW ARMY AND "NOT SIMPLY AT THE PRIVATE LEVEL."

2. THE REPORT ALSO SAID THAT SMITH WAS CONSIDERING LEGALIZING ZANU AND ZAPU SO THAT BOTH LEADERS, MUGABE AND NKOMO, COULD RETURN TO RHODESIA. BLACK SAID THAT SITHOLE HAD BEEN INVITED, PRIOR TO HIS RETURN FOR THE TALKS, TO MEET WITH NYERERE AND MACHEL, BUT HAD REJECTED THE INVITATIONS BECAUSE HE WAS IN A HURRY TO ARRIVE BACK IN SALISBURY. BLACK SPECULATED THAT SINCE BOTH PRESIDENTS HAD SNUBBED HIM IN THE RECENT PAST, SITHOLE WAS "IN NO HURRY" TO SEE THEM.

3. THE REPORT ALSO STATES THAT THE BRITISH ARE STILL BEING VAGUE ON THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WITH OWEN SO FAR NOT REJECTING IT. IT SAYS THAT OWEN HAS "BEEN GIVEN A FULL BRIEFING ON THE CURRENT INTERNAL INITIATIVE (BY) SITHOLE."

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4. COMMENT: BLACK IS GENERALLY A GOOD OBSERVER OF THE RHODESIAN SCENE. FROM THE SOURCES CITED IN HIS ARTICLE, IT APPEARS THAT MOST OF THE SUBSTANCE CAME FROM SITHOLE'S PEOPLE. WE DOUBT THAT SMITH IS CLOSE TO ANY AGREEMENT AS BLACK MAINTAINS. THE ELEMENTS OF THE AGREEMENT LISTED MAY REFLECT WHAT SITHOLE MIGHT SETTLE FOR.

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## Message Attributes

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